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**IDENTIFYING ENTRY POINTS OF ACTION
IN COUNTER RADICALISATION**

COUNTERING SALAFI-JIHADI IDEOLOGY THROUGH
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES – STRATEGIC OPENINGS

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Countering Radicalisation through Development Assistance

In the spring of 2005 the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the Danish Institute for International Studies to undertake a policy study on how to counter radicalisation through development assistance.

Despite growing interest in the field, very little research has yet been conducted. To expand the knowledge base, a number of subject matter experts were identified and asked to produce papers on select topics. Initially, the papers were intended to serve only as background material for the policy study. Due to considerable international interest it has been decided to publish the papers as DIIS working papers, making them available to a broader audience. All papers can be downloaded free of charge from www.diis.dk.

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The papers do not reflect the views of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other government agency, nor do they constitute any official DIIS position. For more information on the policy study, please contact Michael Taarnby Jensen (mtj@diis.dk) or Louise Andersen (lan@diis.dk).

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Abstract

The paper is concerned with explaining the functions of militant Salafi ideology, specifically within the context of radicalisation, and generating hypotheses on how it could be countered through development initiatives. The paper introduces a simple model of a ‘continuum’ of Salafi-Jihadi radicalization—a system spanning from an individual’s initial embrace of the Salafi-Jihadi worldview to the commission of violence and its subsequent legitimization. This model provides a more structured approach to discerning the multiple roles that Salafi-Jihadi ideology plays within the radicalisation process. The paper then contends with the question of how Salafi-Jihadi movements influence their audiences at each juncture identified in the model. The intent is to provide a framework and approach that could be expanded upon or qualitatively enhanced through future research. The study will then offer recommendations for countering Salafi-Jihadi ideology at each level of the model. These recommendations are more ‘strategic openings’—entry points for action—and are not concerned with programmatic elements, however important they might be. This task is beyond the scope of this study and better left to those in the international community. The paper will then conclude with a few suggestions for future research; indeed, there is far more ground to cover than can be traversed in this document.

Introduction¹

The epoch of conflict following the demise of global bipolarity and the subsequent rise of often-violent non-state actors has given rise to the so-called “fourth generation” of warfare (4GW).² Although states can leverage fourth generation warfare instrumentally to further policy, many fourth generation combatants today have no centre of gravity to attack with conventional military means: their trans-national bases are ideologies (defined by CJM Drake as the “beliefs, values, principles, and objectives” by which a group defines itself and justifies its course of action³), thus providing a motivational and heuristic device for continuing their struggle that cannot be bombed away. These 4GW combatants, empowered by the latest information age platforms, target nation states, their societies, and their alleged agents through global campaigns of violence (of varying levels) calibrated with intensive information campaigns emphasizing deception in order to fray the trust between societies and their leaders; they also do so without regard to battlefield linearity, setting them apart from previous generations of combatants. While the strategic ends of these 4GW actors naturally vary – some seek to establish ‘righteous’ political systems; others engage in moral battles against ‘corrupt’ leaders, societies, and practices; and still others fight to prepare for the apocalypse – one thing is crystalline: ideologies represent the fulcrum of their campaigns. Understanding the function of these actors’ ideologies and divining creative measures for countering them are essential steps to displacing these asymmetric threats as military means alone are insufficient.

¹ The author wishes to thank Dr Donovan Chau, Ian Conway, Kim Erskine, Dr Web Keogh, Jonathan Ross-Harrington, and other colleagues at AMTI’s Intelligence & Terrorism Analysis Group for supporting his work on this paper. The opinions expressed herein are the author’s alone and do not necessarily reflect those of AMTI or its clients.

² On fourth generation warfare, see the benchmark publication by William S. Lind, Keith Nightengale, John F. Schmitt, Joseph W. Sutton and Gary I. Wilson, ‘The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation’, *Marine Corps Gazette* 85:11 (October 1989).

³ C.J.M. Drake, *Terrorists’ Target Selection* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1998), pp. 36-37.

Similarly, in the 'war on terrorism' fought principally (ideally) against the myriad components of the Salafi-Jihadi culture⁴ (*Salafiyya Jihadiyya*) that birthed al-Qaida's campaign against 'far' and 'near' enemies, the international community should remain focused primarily on fighting a 'war of ideas'.⁵ Although our conceptions of victory must be modified in this conflict – indeed, states do not achieve overt victories in 4GW as they do in conventional wars – 'winning' will entail (in part) developing a perpetually deeper understanding of why, how and to what

⁴ On Salafism (*Salafiyya*) generally, see Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The new global threat: transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy Council*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1 December 2001; also see the AIVD report, "Saudi influences in the Netherlands. Links between the Salafist mission, radicalisation processes and Islamic terrorism." Salafi-Jihadi culture is the values, attitudes and beliefs that form a proactive, violent worldview and ideology that holds that Islamic thought and practice has been corrupted by centuries of innovation and must be corrected through jihad (coupled with assiduous piety) against the sources of modern 'infidelity' - especially the United States and its 'client' Arab regimes - that promote divergence from the Qur'an's teachings and Muhammad's example, thereby posing an existential threat to the Muslim community (*ummah*). These 'divergences' range from the failure of 'Muslim' regimes to rule by Shari'a law exclusively; the practice of Sufism; to the failure of 'apostate' Muslim regimes to defend Muslim lands and counter encroaching Western influences. One strategic goal of Salafi-Jihadis is to establish a unified transnational community of "true" believers - the Caliphate - but this is an oversimplification of this culture's *raison d'être*. Salafi-Jihadis are not only interested in establishing a caliphal system: many Salafi-Jihadis are simply interested in promoting and waging jihad as an act of worship, with little understanding of strategic rationales; reaping the rewards of martyrdom; facilitating the beginning of the end of time; or in some cases, simply taking part in adventure modeled on the raid paradigm immortalized in Islamic literature and glamorized by Salafi-Jihadi exponents. Salafi-Jihadi thought separates itself from 'scientific' or 'reform' Salafis (*Salafiyya Ilmiyya*) in that the latter represent a conservative force that often legitimizes the political status quo in places like Saudi Arabia and emphasizes reform through assiduous piety (i.e. "promoting the good and renouncing the evil"), social activism and 'advice' to rulers (although they typically shun political participation, thus separating them from Islamists such as the Muslim Brotherhood, who seek to gain political power through generally non-violent methods working overtly within political systems). Indeed the failure of reformist Salafis to actively partake in jihad against Muslim governments or in the West (though most have little issue with supporting Islamic insurgencies in places like Iraq, Chechnya, the Palestinian territories, etc.) draws the ire of militant Salafis, the latter of which castigate them as 'prevaricators'. However, even though the more moderate Salafis eschew intra-Muslim violence generated by the '*takfir*' (excommunicative) rationale of Salafi-Jihadis (indeed there are many levels of *takfir*, ranging from the excommunication of Muslim regimes, as practiced by al-Qaida's 'core' ideologues, to the excommunication of most sectors of Muslim society, as endorsed by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi), they generally share an understanding that salvation is for the few who follow the example of the *Salaf* – the first followers of Muhammad.

⁵ For more on the 'battle of the narrative' in the 'war on terrorism', see William D. Casebeer and James A. Russell, "Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive 'Counter-Narrative Strategy'," *Strategic Insights* 4:3 (March 2005).

degree ideas matter to the global Salafi jihad; steady accumulation of knowledge concerning how these ideas relate to the multi-level ends, variegated means and continuous evolution of global jihadism; and unstinting work by the international community to de-legitimize and preempt these ideas. While this partial 'recipe' for success is far from novel and lacking in precise benchmarks, it essentially mirrors how this adversary confronts us. To summarize the recent comments of an al-Qaida strategist, this war is an "historic challenge:" its epic timeline and the scope and nature of its information campaigns set it apart from previous wars – it is one where victory is synonymous not only with a reformulated understanding of patience but also gaining the upper-hand in a moral, narrative duel.⁶

This specific contribution (largely a thought piece) centres on understanding the functions of ideology within the wider system of Salafi-Jihadi warfare, specifically, how it enables the radicalization process of militants – an important step in this war of ideas. Moreover, it is interested in providing the international community with select ideas on how it can effectively fight a narrative battle against Salafi-Jihadi ideology through development initiatives. As Quintan Wiktorowicz, a leading scholar of Islamic social movements, wrote, "If beliefs do indeed matter, then policy needs to focus on [jihadis'] ideological and cultural structures..."⁷

NOTES ON THE APPROACH

This paper is concerned with explaining the functions of militant Salafi ideology, specifically within the context of radicalization, and generating hypotheses on how it might be countered through development initiatives. Salafi-Jihadi ideology is highlighted exclusively as it threatens global security and will likely do so for the foreseeable future. Other Sunni and Shi'a ideologies that legitimize regional jihads, whether the Palestinian Hamas' or Hizballah's, for example, have not inspired global violence on the same scale; they are qualitatively different and are not anticipated to threaten the international community to the same extent as networks like al-Qaida.

The paper begins by introducing a simple model supported by the research of other scholars that details a 'continuum' of Salafi-Jihadi radicalization – a system spanning from an individ-

⁶ The comments of Louis Atiyat Allah in Reuven Paz, "From Madrid to Europe: Al-Qaeda Exports the War in Iraq to Europe," PRISM Occasional Papers 3:3 (July 2005) at:
<http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=538>

⁷ See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Suicide Bombings: Do Beliefs Matter?" (September 2004) at:
http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/Soc3264/Wiktorowicz_EXPLAINING_SUICIDE_BOMBINGS.doc

ual's initial embrace of the Salafi-Jihadi worldview to the commission of violence and its subsequent legitimization. This model provides a more structured approach to discerning the multiple roles that Salafi-Jihadi ideology plays within the radicalization process. The paper then contends with the question of how Salafi-Jihadi movements influence their audiences at each juncture identified in the model. Certainly there will be some overlap here, but the intent is to provide a framework and approach that could be expanded upon or qualitatively enhanced through future research. The study will then offer recommendations for countering Salafi-Jihadi ideology at each level of the model. These recommendations are more 'strategic openings' – entry points for action – and are not concerned with programmatic elements, however important they might be. This task is beyond the scope of this study and better left to those in the international community. The paper will then conclude with a few suggestions for future research; indeed, there is far more ground to cover than can be traversed in this document.

One caveat needs to be inserted here: The author recognizes that ideology cannot by itself satisfactorily explain jihadi violence; research has demonstrated that it works in tandem with social processes and other grievances to create militants.⁸ Ideology is not the only element critical to address through development initiatives designed to counter the Salafi-Jihadi worldview, even if it is the main focus of this paper. However, as will be clarified, causality cannot be wholly ascribed to structural deficiencies like poverty; politics; or discrimination. Clearly, ideology matters.

Part One: The Role of Salafi-Jihadi Ideology within the Radicalization to Justification Continuum

The role of ideology within the Salafi-Jihadi radicalization process is multifunctional and inextricably attached to social processes, as the work of Marc Sageman and others has demonstrated. Quintan Wiktorowicz, writing on the importance of considering beliefs in conjunction with more structural explanations for jihadi violence outlines some functions of Salafi-Jihadi ideology and its marriage to social processes:

⁸ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

A (jihadi) movement proffers its ideology as a strategy to pursue spiritual self interest – what Muslims must do to ensure that they follow the word of God and reach Paradise. It also outlines the costs of disobedience to God and errant religious beliefs and practices. In short, the ideology provides a heuristic device for those interested in the hereafter – a “what to do” list for salvation. Socialization...is intended to inculcate interest in salvation as well as ideologically sanctioned strategies for reaching Paradise.⁹

The ultimate function of Salafi-Jihadi ideology implicit in Wiktorowicz’s definition is to achieve divine imperatives articulated as strategic ends (whether martyrdom, liberated Shari’a zones, the perpetuation of jihad as an end itself, etc.) through violence.¹⁰ Yet Wiktorowicz’s definition highlights not only the ends of jihadi ideology but also its means: it is a “heuristic” device, a “what to do list for salvation,” and its norms, methods and symbols are socially reinforced. Similarly, as Reuven Paz surmised, Salafi-Jihadi ideology both expresses and reinforces a “culture of global jihad.”¹¹ Apart from Salafi-Jihadi ideology’s marriage to social processes, this culture (Sageman’s “global Salafi jihad”¹²) and its strategic purposes could not be perpetuated. However, from another vantage, without the “beliefs, values, principles, and objectives” of ideology, its methods and ends could neither be articulated nor legitimized in the eyes of its sympathizers.¹³

The multifunctional nature of Salafi-Jihadi ideology within the radicalization process is captured in Michael Taarnby’s depiction of the ‘phases’ that preceded the Hamburg cell’s decision to stage the 11 September 2001 attacks:

- Individual alienation and marginalization
- Spiritual quest

⁹ See generally Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*; also see Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” p. 7.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 7; also Jeffrey B. Cozzens, “Approaching al-Qaida’s Warfare: Function, Culture and Grand Strategy,” in Magnus Ranstorp and Lars Nicander (eds.), *Mapping Terrorism Research* (London: Routledge [forthcoming]). These range from the establishment of Shari’a-governed zones leading eventually to a Caliphate in Islamic lands at the instrumental level, to the vague ambition of achieving individual and communal salvation through purifying violence and fighting that would usher in the end of time at the existential spectrum.

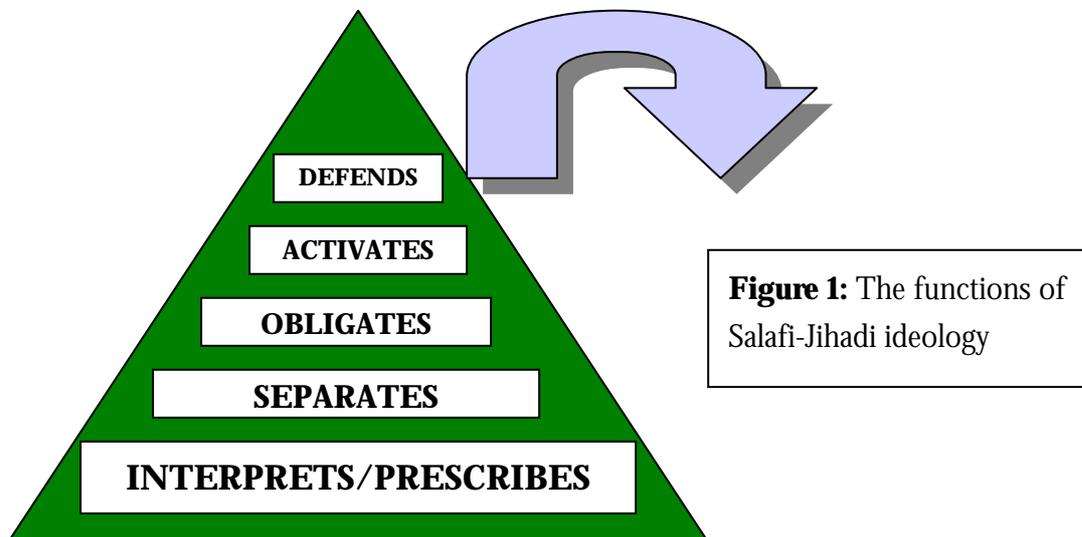
¹¹ Reuven Paz, “Middle East Islamism in the European Arena,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 6:3 (September 2002) at: <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue3/jv6n3a6.html#Dr.%20Reuven%20Paz>

¹² Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 1.

¹³ Ibid.

- Process of radicalization
- Meeting and associating with like-minded people [socialization]
- Gradual seclusion and cell formation
- Acceptance of violence
- Connection with a gatekeeper [a militant connected to a terrorist network]
- Going operational¹⁴

While scholars like Sageman might quibble with Taarnby's processes, arguing that socialization is the most important and first component, this is largely a 'chicken-or-the-egg' debate and immaterial to this paper. Taarnby's processes reflect important phases of ideology's function within the Salafi-Jihadi radicalization and 'activation' process and are supported by data Sageman gathered on hundreds of Salafi-Jihadis – the most comprehensive study to date.¹⁵ I propose to generalize and expand Taarnby's phases of radicalization to more explicitly highlight the function of ideology while adding a further layer of analysis to capture its ability to shape jihadi violence and legitimize it after the fact. This alternative conception of the function of Salafi-Jihadi ideology is depicted in the below diagram and will be re-called later in the paper when specific counter-ideology development initiatives are recommended.



¹⁴ Michael Taarnby, "Recruitment of Islamist Terrorists in Europe. Trends and Perspectives," Research report funded by the Danish Ministry of Justice, 14 January 2005.

¹⁵ Generally, see Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*.

In terms of the diagram's shape, the triangle represents ideology's role in shaping the increasingly focused and personal phases of radicalization leading to jihadi violence, and the feedback arrow their defense after the fact. The diagram's shape also implicitly recognizes the limited number of those who follow Salafi-Jihadi ideology to its violent conclusion. Indeed, there are those sympathetic to components of the Salafi-Jihadi worldview as interpreted by Ayman al-Zawahiri, for instance, who do not wholly excommunicate Western or Muslim societies; further, there are others who hold to some notion of *takfir* (the doctrine of excommunication that legitimizes violence against Muslim apostates),¹⁶ yet seemingly do not internalize a personal obligation to jihad to the extent that they act; and so on. While the diagram might be inadequate in at least one sense, as numerous Salafi groups (i.e. al-Muhajiroun) defend violence against the West yet actually play a very limited direct role (if any) in violent operations, suggesting a 'jump' in the illustrated radicalization process, the diagram still accounts for these groups: it shows at its top how they not only defend violence (at least against Western forces) but also how they function at the basic level to construct and purvey a worldview (at the diagram's base).

As seen at the base of Figure 1, drawing from Wiktorowicz (and others such as Bernard Lewis¹⁷), Salafi-Jihadi ideology functions at a basic and global level as an interpretive and

¹⁶ See Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 28 (Autumn 2005), pp. 75-97. *Takfir* is primarily based on the "ten voiders" of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, which describe the manifestations of apostasy and provide grounds for excommunication and the legitimization of the murder of 'apostates'. It was invoked in the modern era largely through the writings of Sayyid Qutb and one of his disciples, Muhammad Abdus Salam Faraj, although these largely applied *takfir* to political systems and regimes. Shurki Mustapha, leader of al-*Takfir wa'l Hijra* ('Excommunication and Holy Flight'), took this doctrine one step further and excommunicated Muslim societies (Egyptian in his case) and prescribed physical separation to avoid 'contamination' and to develop strength for their eventual overthrow. More current applications of *takfir* do not resemble Mustapha's gradualist interpretation. For example, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, chief figurehead of al-Qaida in Iraq, has excommunicated swathes of Iraqi society, from Shi'a to Kurds to anyone that votes in order to justify their murder. Ironically, al-Qaida ideologue Ayman al-Zawahiri - himself an adherent of the Qutubist interpretation of this doctrine that excommunicates regimes but not large segments of Muslim societies - has called on al-Zarqawi to moderate his tactics in order to shore-up broader support for al-Qaida's strategic goals. Other Salafis, including some that fought in the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union (even Abdullah Azzam - see Sageman, 2004) discount the jihadis' 'decentralization' of *takfir*, claiming that even a 'mustard seed' of faith (*iman*) is sufficient to still be called a Muslim. For the most part, only renouncing one's faith could provide evidence sufficient for these 'reformist' Salafis to excommunicate another Muslim (though this is an oversimplification of a more nuanced process).

¹⁷See Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam. Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003).

prescriptive device; it details the ills facing human societies, the Muslim individual and, more importantly, the *ummah*. It presents a simple solution to redress these maladies: physical jihad in defence of Muslim lands and against the sources of infidelity, whether apostate Muslims, their regimes, or the “Jews and Crusaders” and their agents, including the international community.¹⁸ Echoing Sayyid Qutb’s interpretation of the ‘Abode of Islam’ that is unequivocally inimical to ‘the Abode of War’,¹⁹ Salafi-Jihadi thought frames the perceived afflictions of the Muslim world and its violent prescriptions within the context of the “perennial battle” between the forces of good and evil – the ‘saved sect’ of ‘true’ Muslims, the Salafis, versus the ‘Zionist-Crusader alliance’.²⁰ This timeless cosmic struggle between the “camps of truth and falsehood” serves as the underlying pretext for jihadi operations like 11 September, according al-Qaida affiliate Saif al-Din al-Ansari.²¹ As bin Laden wrote, “Believers are in one tent and ... infidels are in another... [Believers] should incessantly hate Allah’s enemies and curse them, as he should constantly be loyal to the Believers.”²² By adopting the “exclusionary ideology”²³ that serves as the basis for the culture of global jihad and following it through to its physical end – whether through a ‘martyrdom’ operation in the West or insurgent violence in Iraq – *mujahideen* hope to secure salvation for themselves, their families and the wider *ummah*.²⁴ This component of Salafi-Jihadi ideology underscores the feeling of many militant Salafis that warfare is religious and communal before it is political, particularly since Salafism in general finds

¹⁸ See a litany of perceived grievances through al-Qaida’s Salafi-Jihadi veil at: “Translation of April 24, 2002 al-Qaeda document,” ‘A statement from *qaidat al-jihad* regarding the mandates of the heroes and the legality of the operations in New York and Washington’ at: http://www.mepc.org/public_asp/journal_vol10/alqaeda.html. Also see extracts of Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet’s Banner* (December 2001) at: http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ayman_bk.html

¹⁹ See Yvonne Y. Haddad, “Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival,” in John Esposito (ed.) *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 80; also al-Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet’s Banner*.

²⁰ David Zeidan, ‘The Islamic Fundamentalist View of Life As a Perennial Battle’, *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 5:4 (December 2001) at: <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2001/issue4/jv5n4a2.htm>; also Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat.”

²¹ Saif al-Din al-Ansari, “The Raid on New York and Washington - A generic description,” (FBIS trans.) 1 September 2002 at: http://www.why-war.com/files/qaeda_celebrate_911.txt

²² “Bin Laden’s Sermon for the Feast of Sacrifice,” MEMRI Special Dispatch No. 476, 5 March 2003, p. 12

²³ Author’s July 2003 conversation with Dr. Magnus Ranstorp.

²⁴ Generally, see Cozzens, “Approaching al-Qaida.”

this distinction heretical.²⁵ This story and prescription could be considered the Salafi-Jihadi center of gravity.

Further, the exclusive nature of Salafi-Jihadi ideology – indeed Salafi thought as a whole – separates those who embrace its prescriptions from infidel societies, whether spiritually or socially, and in so doing, furthers the radicalization process through the promotion of ‘brotherhood’.²⁶ Most Salafis consider themselves *al Ta’ifa al Mansoura* (“the victorious sect”), who alone will be saved at the end of time, and place a great deal of import on correcting ‘innovations’ and ensuring ‘proper’ conduct.²⁷ Salafi-Jihadis consider themselves in an even more exclusive light than ‘moderate’ Salafis, whom they label *Marji’eh* (prevaricators) because they do not endorse revolutionary jihad²⁸: they view themselves a *Mustadh’afin* (a “brotherhood of the oppressed”).²⁹ Indeed, an exclusive brotherhood is the promise of entering into the culture of global jihad, as accounts of al-Qaida fighters at Tora Bora and Abdullah Azzam’s last book, *The Lofty Mountain*, suggest (Azzam being the primary Salafi ideologue behind the jihad against the Soviet Union and a mentor of bin Laden).³⁰ This fraternity reaches its apogee in combat and revolves around the common pursuit of martyrdom.³¹ The promise of this brotherhood and its associated identity appear to be essential components of the recruitment (or “joining”) process, especially for jihadis in the West.³² In the most extreme cases of Salafi “parallelism”, ‘*takfiri*’ ideology (see note 11) legitimizes the excommunication of, and thus separation from, all elements of society outside their cells, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, not just ‘apostate’ regimes or Western governments. This permits the targeting of everyone outside the group for violence.³³ Although there is still much to learn about the present-day manifestation of the *takfiri* trend, which originated in Egypt under Shukri Mustapha’s extreme

²⁵ See “Al Qaeda Publication, ‘Sout Al Jihad’, Interviews ‘Saleh al Oufi’, New Leader of the *Mujahideen* in the ‘Al Haramain Country’ [Saudi Arabia],” SITE Institute, 25 June 2004.

²⁶ On Salafi parallelism, see AIVD Report “From Dawa to Jihad,” 30 March 2005, at: http://www.aivd.nl/actueel_publicaties/aivd-publicaties/from_dawa_to_jihad_

²⁷ Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat,”

²⁸ See Nibras Kazimi, “A Virulent Ideology in Mutation: Zarqawi Upstages Maqdisi,” in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani and Eric Brown (eds), *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2005), Vol. 2, p. 64.

²⁹ See Paz, ‘Middle East Islamism in the European Arena’; and Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat.”

³⁰ Abdullah Azzam, *The Lofty Mountain* (London: Azzam publications, 2003).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Taarnby, “Recruitment of Islamist Terrorists in Europe,” p. 38.

³³ See “From Dawa to Jihad,” pp. 33-34.

interpretation of Qutb's doctrine in the 1970's and now exists in an ambiguous form, it is known that this movement is based upon the doctrines of "accusation and separation," similar to the original al-*Takfir wal-Hijra*. In the West, jihadis like Muhammad Bouyeri, the murderer of Theo van Gogh, evidence the '*takfiri*' trend.³⁴ In the Middle East, Al-Zarqawi's network in Iraq,³⁵ and historically, the GIA in Algeria are also illustrative.

Salafi-Jihadi ideology also works in tandem with jihadi socialization to inculcate a sense of obligation to physical jihad. Case studies of Salafi-Jihadi activities in Europe, North America and the Middle East published by Sageman (2004) and Nesser (2003) support this assertion. In fact, it seems social reinforcement of one's obligation to wage physical jihad elevates it to the status of a sacrament, a point made during the jihad against the Soviet Union by Azzam and illustrated in bin Laden's 2003 "Sermon for the Feast of Sacrifice."³⁶ Bin Laden wrote, "The most important religious duty – after belief itself – is to ward off and fight the enemy ... *Jihad* is obligatory now for the Islamic Nation, which is in a state of sin unless it gives of its sons ... to maintain *Jihad*."³⁷ In addition to online chat fora and the statements of Salafi-Jihadi icons like bin Laden or al-Zarqawi, this sentiment is often reinforced at the individual and cell levels by *mujahideen* who have tasted combat and are therefore perceived as 'qualified' to extol the virtues of violence in the path of God; they are considered heroes who have "made their blood cheap" for Islam.³⁸ The inspirational import of *Ghazis* – Muslim combat veterans – to neophyte jihadists cannot overstated, as alleged al-Qaida operative Esa' al-Hindi wrote in *The Army of Medinah in Kashmir*: "Simply interacting with *Ghazis* ... can help to alter ones [sic] outlook and influence oneself to procure a taste for [jihad] in their blood, making it akin to their nature."³⁹

Finally, Salafi-Jihadi ideology enables the activation of those who have internalized their obligation to physical jihad to violence. It does so through its function as rational belief – as Wikto-

³⁴ On Bouyeri, the most informative source is Peter Nesser, "The Slaying of the Dutch Filmmaker," FFI/Rapport-2005/00376 (February 2005).

³⁵ See 'Mujahidin terrorised Fallujah, residents say' at: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,3-1359782_1,00.html (accessed 15 November 2004).

³⁶ See Abdullah Azzam, *Defence of Muslim Lands* (Ch. 3) at: www.religioscope.com/info/doc/jihad/azzam_defence_5_chap3.htm

³⁷ "Bin Laden's Sermon for the Feast of Sacrifice," pp. 12-13.

³⁸ Jamestown 3:2, p. 2

³⁹ 'Esa al-Hindi, *The Army of Medinah in Kashmir* (Birmingham, UK: Maktabah Al Ansaar, 1999), p. 124.

rowicz explains, a belief that seeks the personal benefit of martyrdom.⁴⁰ Along with the often-enumerated ‘martyr’s rewards’, the mystic qualities of Salafi-Jihadi ideology assure militants that, for example, pain in martyrdom is minimal and that God is involved on the battlefield on their behalf; he will support them in their current operation even if it appears tactically unwinnable.⁴¹ Moreover, ideology also impacts and shapes to an extent the strategies and tactics Salafi-Jihadis employ on the battlefield.⁴² And after an operation has been conducted, countless examples of Salafi-Jihadi defensive posturing provide insight into how ideology is used to justify violence, whether against non-combatants, regimes, or militaries. Often this is done in the form of pre-recorded ‘martyrs’ wills’ that purport to legitimize operations.⁴³ This defensive function is illustrated by the feed-back loop in the diagram.

MODES OF INFLUENCE

Salafi-Jihadis leverage a variety of mediums to purvey their ideology that could be seen as specific to each of the diagram’s levels. Generally speaking, as one moves from top to bottom on the diagram, the number of mediums increase (the exception being the very top of the triangle, where the feedback loop of the ideological system is found – where ideology harnesses a wide-range of media to justify violence). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to account for all of these, several examples will suffice to illustrate the modes Salafi-Jihadis use to inculcate their ideology and purvey it to various audiences.⁴⁴

At the bottom of the diagram, where Salafi-Jihadi ideology functions to interpret the myriad ills facing the Muslim world, the greatest number of ideological mediums and modes of communication are found. Most of these are “passive” in their approach: many do not explicitly call for violent jihad and all generally target wide Muslim audiences. These function to highlight perceived Muslim oppression, fuel discontent with the ‘status quo’ and articulate the

⁴⁰ See Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombing.”

⁴¹ See David Cook, “The Recovery of Radical Islam In the Wake of the Defeat of the Taliban,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15:1 (Spring 2003), pp. 32-33. Also see “Commander of the Khobar terrorist squad tells the story of the operation,” Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) trans. (Special Dispatch Series no. 731), 15 June 2004 at: <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP73104>

⁴² See Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 1. Sageman wrote, “Salafi ideology determines its mission, sets its goals, and guides its tactics.” Also see Cozzens, “Approaching al-Qaida.”

⁴³ See, for instance, Intel Center, “Al-Qaeda’s Riyadh Martyrdom Tapes - v1.0,” (18 October 2003).

⁴⁴ For a more detailed account of these modes of influence, both ‘active’ and ‘passive’, see Jeffrey B. Cozzens, “Islamist groups developing new recruiting strategies,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review* (1 Feb 2005)

urgent need for personal and social transformation within the global *ummah* by advocating Salafi agendas and practices. Passive non-violent Salafi mediums include Salafi missionary organizations like *Tablighi Jamaat*, countless educational and reformist institutions, such as those in Yemen run by Shaykh Muqbil Bin Hadi al-Wadii; various Salafi strands of *islah* (reform) movements in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, for example; vocal Salafi ideologues (especially from Saudi Arabia); and a plethora of Salafi NGOs that operate (primarily with Gulf funding) worldwide.⁴⁵ While brevity does not permit a sufficient investigation of each, they generally advocate the ‘re-Islamization’ of the *ummah* and the winning of converts by preaching the dualistic Salafi *manhaj* (“process”) that rejects all ‘innovations’ (*bida*) like Shi’ism, Sufism, or even the four traditional schools (*madhabs*) of Islam. Thus they condemn all practices not explicitly outlined in the Qur’an, Sunna, “and the example of the Companions,” and vehemently emphasize the transformation of personal and communal conduct through “*tarbiya* (education and cultivation to encourage proper Muslim practices) and *tasifya* (purification).”⁴⁶ The modes of disseminating this ideology are as varied as information age communication itself: in addition to the organizations noted above, web sites, internet chat rooms, propaganda leaflets, mosques, schools, magazines, itinerant preachers, political parties, and many other media play a role.

While the majority of these Salafi mediums are geared towards working within existing social (and sometimes political) structures to reform individuals and societies, they articulate an extreme worldview and vision for society that very closely approximates the thought of Salafi-Jihadis, the chief differences being how the transformation should occur in the near term (i.e. through activism and piety versus violence), and importantly, their rejection of *takfir*.⁴⁷ Thus, these sometimes function as ideological gateways for individuals into more violent forms of opposition, though it must be stressed that this is the exception, not the rule.⁴⁸ These ‘gateways’ have opened a bit wider recently as there exists a general feeling among many reformist Salafis that “current conditions” – especially the Western military intervention in Iraq – favor defensive jihad against the sources of Muslim oppression which have placed Islam ‘under siege’.⁴⁹ These conditions have been exploited by Salafi-Jihadis, which use the Salafi *manhaj* to ‘blur’ the paradigm of defensive legitimacy (successfully crafted by Azzam during the first

⁴⁵ Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat.”

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid; also see the AIVD Report, “From Dawa to Jihad.”

⁴⁹ On this concept, see generally Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat.”

Afghan jihad) with Ayman al-Zawahiri's conception of jihad against the West, creating a situation where the potential pool of Salafi-Jihadis sympathizers is growing.⁵⁰ In sum, the function of these passive, non-violent mediums to purvey an exclusive ideology is analogous to a farmer tilling fertilized soil, then forgetting his work: inevitably weeds will germinate given time and 'favorable' conditions.

Of course, other passive ideological mediums highlight the need for reform *and* the urgency of combating global *kufir* (infidelity) through jihad. Similar to the above depiction of passive reformist mediums, these modes target wide audiences – typically global in scope – yet introduce a revolutionary ideology that seeks to redress Muslim suffering through violence. Like the immediate and definitive nature of the worldview they articulate, these offer a much more pointed prescription for suffering than reformist dogma and clearly define the adversary. Violence, Salafi-Jihadis claim, whether against 'apostate' Arab/Muslim regimes who fail to rule exclusively by Shari'a political systems (however ill-defined these might be); Muslims who have been excommunicated; Western societies and/or governments; non-Muslim militaries 'warring against Islam'; or against some combination of these is the only means to unite and restore the greatness of the *ummah*.

This passive propaganda is naturally communicated via the macro-narratives of jihadi icons such as Ayman al-Zawahiri, Usama bin Laden, and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, and obviously readily available online. It is also furthered by the more specific, widely-read online fatwas and publications of an emerging ultra-radical generation of (principally) Saudi clerics and scholars-cum-militants like Sheikh Naser al-Fahd, Louis Attiyat Allah, and the late Abdullah al-Rashoud.⁵¹ These are particularly influential because of their radical *fatwas*; their authoritative 'interpretations' of the future direction of al-Qaida; their ubiquitous online presence and, in some cases, their 'heroic' paradigms: mimicking the scholar-warrior model of Abdullah Azzam, some of these legitimize their sermonizing by partaking in physical jihad. This propaganda also includes numerous jihadi publications, such as *Sawt al-Jihad*, *Muaskar al-Battar*, a publication dedicated to female jihadists, *al-Khansa*; and a torrent of recent internet magazines like "the

⁵⁰ Ibid. Based upon his studies of Algerian, Egyptian and Jordanian Salafis, Wiktorowicz writes:

In Salafi circles, there is a great deal of reformist appreciation for Bin Laden's arguments legitimating an attack against the United States. Even though reformists may disagree with civilian targeting, there is a shared understanding about the defensive nature of jihad, rooted in the earlier Afghan experience, that seems pertinent today to many Salafis; and in his fatwas and various public statements, Bin Laden is careful to couch the jihad as a defense of Islam in the face of American aggression.

⁵¹See Stephen Ulph, "Prominent al-Qaeda Ideologue Killed in al-Qaim," *Jamestown Terrorism Focus* 2:12 (24 June 2005) at: <http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369727>

Camel's hump" emanating from al-Zarqawi's al-Qaida in Iraq.⁵² Online books such as *The Operation of 11 Rabi al-Awwal: The east Riyadh operation and our war with the United States and its agents* published in August 2003 and written by the al-Qaida mouthpiece Centre for Islamic Studies and Research also illustrate this type of passive medium, as do the recent 'newscasts' from the Iraqi Salafi milieu.⁵³

Such passive mediums purvey Salafi-Jihadi ideology in ways critical to the first stages of the recruiting process. First, the online publications have pointedly framed the Salafi-Jihadi conflict with Arab/Muslim regimes (especially the Saudi and nascent Iraqi governments), Western interests in the Muslim world, and certainly the war in Iraq in exclusively religious terms. In doing so, these provide a theological – and thus legitimizing – backdrop to bin Laden's message that there is only implacable hostility between Muslims and the West, bolstering his assertion that defensive jihad is the only solution for the 'true' *ummah*. Further, through the selective invocation of Islamic history and sacred writings, these online publications, streaming videos and television broadcasts also call to mind the glories of past Muslim conquest; God's provision in warfare; and glorify the 'heroism' and 'purity' of martyrs fallen in jihad. This strategy could be interpreted as targeting Muslim youth in the Middle East who maintain high levels of devotion as children (53% of Sageman's 117 person sample, the vast majority of which did not attend *madaris* – 'madrassas'), or conversely, disaffected internet-savvy youth in North Africa or Europe.⁵⁴ The latter generally maintain a much poorer grasp of Islam than their parents, are often involved in criminality, and thus seek adventure, identity, and assurance of salvation through embracing the passive call to jihad (usually with other peers or kin).⁵⁵ As Atran and Stern report, "More than 80 percent of known jihadis are Muslim emigrants living in diaspora communities, often marginalised from the host society and living in hard-to-penetrate social networks comprising friends and family."⁵⁶ Further, many Islamist manuscripts are being translated into English online, making them available to Muslim diasporans whose primary language is not Arabic.

⁵² Cozzens, "Islamist groups develop new recruitment strategies."

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, pp. 74-75

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See "Suicide Bombers Turning to websites," 29 September 2005, at: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/breaking/suicide-bombers-turning-to-websites/2005/09/29/1127804581389.html>

At the second and third levels – separation and obligation – ideology is disseminated through a much narrower and targeted, or “active” means, often on a personal and ‘cell’ level. ‘Active’ propaganda is aimed at individuals perceived as vulnerable or receptive, such as friends, kin, or those seeking new identities, like the North Africans in Europe who have been linked to both criminality and jihadi activities, such as Nizar Trabelsi.⁵⁷ *Ghazis*, friends, kin and perceived religious authorities represent the primary active mediums of communication.⁵⁸

Salafi-Jihadi thought and brotherhood are reinforced at the individual and cell levels by the establishment of cliques, which Sageman’s work demonstrates are powerful social mechanisms for translating and molding violent thought into action:

Cliques...are the social mechanism that puts pressure on prospective participants to join, defines a certain social reality the ever more intimate friends, and facilitates the development of a shared collective social identity and strong emotional feelings for the in-group. This process...takes time and intense face-to-face interaction...Cliques literally transform lives and, in so doing, change the meaning and impact of friendship bonds that pave the way to joining the jihad. Selected events that might otherwise be largely independent and disconnected are linked through symbolic means that stress continuity and form a unified worldview...[Cliques] weave a grand narrative that Islam is in danger, implying a common fate that builds collective identity.⁵⁹

Further, for individuals who have embraced the ideology of global Salafi jihad, the role of the worldwide web (specifically, the some 4,000 jihadi chat rooms now active)⁶⁰ cannot be overstated in terms of its ability to inculcate a wider sense of identity and brotherhood beyond the cell level, or to stay in touch with other cell members in order to mutually reinforce a common worldview and strategy. In a sense, as Sageman’s work indicates, these chat rooms mimic to some degree the ideal function of terrorist training camps: they often fuse tactical instruction,

⁵⁷ See Peter Nesser, *Jihad in Europe - A survey of the motivations for Sunni Islamist terrorism in post-millennium Europe*, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, FFI/Rapport-2004/01146, p. 48.

⁵⁸ See the work of Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, especially pp. 99-174.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 154-155.

⁶⁰The figures of Scott Atran and Jessica Stern. See “Suicide Bombers Turning to websites,” 29 September 2005, at: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/breaking/suicide-bombers-turning-to-websites/2005/09/29/1127804581389.html>

Salafi religious indoctrination, and the egalitarianism of training camp settings “to generate an esprit de corps” for the ideal – albeit virtual – *ummah*.⁶¹

Ideology is conveyed and reinforced at the fourth level of the diagram – activation – through both passive mediums and face-to-face contact. It is at this point in the model where the number of ideological mediums likely begins to increase, reflective of both “jihadi culturing” leading up to an operation as well as the individual’s self-interest in pursuing the rewards of jihad (martyrdom being the ultimate example).⁶² The nature of mediums likely shifts slightly at this phase as attention is re-focused from group peers to mediums of religious assurance, guidance, and inspiration, whether active or passive. The ‘Last Night’ document found in the 9/11 hijacker’s luggage is one example of the latter, stemming from within the group; passive extra-group examples include Qu’ran 56, which details the material blessing garnered by the martyr in Paradise; various hadith concerning the rewards of martyrdom; online accounts of *Ghazis* in which the assurance of God’s presence in combat and at the time of death is discussed; and of course, a genre of jihadi literature devoted to martyrdom, also naturally accessible online.⁶³ This theory is buttressed by Wiktorowicz’s analysis that Salafi-Jihadi social processes cannot by themselves be considered the sole causal agents for the ‘activation’ phase, despite Sageman’s claim that Salafis “sacrifice for the group.”⁶⁴ Wiktorowicz observes:

Certainly jihadi suicide bombers have a vested interest in their Salafi identity and as a result view themselves as part of an imagined community of true believers. But they sacrifice themselves to reap the spiritual benefits of martyrdom ... *sacrificing one’s life for the group is a form of apostasy, since it signifies action in the name of a group rather than God. A suicide bombing is only an act of martyrdom if it is done as an act of worship* (italics in original).⁶⁵

However, perhaps the most vivid modes of active assurance and inspiration at this phase come from Salafi-Jihadi ‘scholars’, especially those who have taken part in combat or overcame personal hardship yet persist in preaching jihad, such as Abu Hamza al-Masri or Omar Abdel Rahman. Adullah Azzam wrote, “The scholar who lives the Jihad in his daily life, who

⁶¹ Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, pp. 161-163.

⁶² Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” 9

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 118.

⁶⁵ Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” p. 10.

sees the whizzing of bullets, feels the moisture of trenches and smells the blood of martyrs, surely he is more worthy of explaining the rulings and laws that pertain to Jihad?"⁶⁶ Like Azzam, these offer religious opinions that elevate jihad next to belief itself.⁶⁷ Moreover, they are perceived as possessing the ability to interpret sacred texts in light of rapidly changing circumstances – something Wiktorowicz argues few Muslims feel equipped to do – and more importantly, maintain immense credibility in jihadi circles owing to their sacrifice, devotion and charisma.⁶⁸ The mantle of scholar and soldier serves as potent reassurance to other jihadis of the theological propriety of jihad, particularly because these are often able to give first-hand accounts of divine guidance in combat, much as bin Laden has done in the past.⁶⁹ However, these warrior-clerics, of course, do not always personally and directly motivate operations. *Ghazis* (or at least training camp attendees) also sometimes function as important mediums for motivation in addition to often serving as 'leads' in terrorist attacks, as is well-documented in Europe and the Middle East. Yet, in so doing, it is highly-probably that they reference and interpret the readily-available jihadi religious literature online, as post attack statements suggest.⁷⁰ It should also be mentioned at this point that the passive and active ideological mediums that motivate and reassure at the operational level also function *in part* to define the style and target of violence.⁷¹

Concerning the defense and legitimization of jihadi violence, all of the above mediums apply, from the passive to the active. However, statements intended for global consumption (passive propaganda), such as the ramblings of bin Laden, or perhaps the more poignant martyrs' wills are widely-distributed online or via satellite broadcast.

As scholars like Wiktorowicz and Sageman have demonstrated, Salafi-Jihadi ideology plays a multifunctional role in the radicalization process and is inextricably bound to socialization. Nevertheless, its chief goal is to inculcate a culture of global jihad through different mediums,

⁶⁶ Adullah Azam, quoted in the publisher's forward, *Up Lofty Mountain* (London: Azzam Publications, 2003), p. xi.

⁶⁷ "Sheikh Abu Hamza al-Masri on martyrdom and the love of death," Middle East Media Research Institute trans. (Special Dispatch 762), 12 August 2004 at:

<http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP76204>

⁶⁸ Adullah Azam, quoted in the publisher's forward, *Up Lofty Mountain* (London: Azzam Publications, 2003), p. xi.

⁶⁹ See Wiktorowicz, "Suicide Bombings," p. 11; also Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 117.

⁷⁰ For instance, see "Commander of the Khobar terrorist squad tells the story of the operation," Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) trans. (Special Dispatch Series no. 731), 15 June 2004 at:

<http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP73104>

⁷¹ See Cozzens, "Approaching al-Qaida."

which facilitate its function as a sort of system. Inputs could be considered the introduction of its worldview and the processes of separation and obligation; the output is the kinetic attack; and the feed-back loop represented by the defense and legitimization of violence.

Part Two: Using Development Initiatives to Counter Salafi-Jihadi Ideology – Strategic Openings

Beyond describing the functions of Salafi-Jihadi ideology, the above model also provides a methodological approach to developing recommendations for countering jihadi ideology through development initiatives. More specifically, the model offers an approach that highlights strategic ‘openings’ where Salafi-Jihadi ideology might be vulnerable and potentially exploited by the international community. These openings will be analyzed in the ensuing pages.

APPROACHING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior to proceeding, a brief discussion about the theory of development initiatives and counter-terrorism as they apply to countering Salafi-Jihadi ideology is in order to orient the approach. First, volumes of literature are devoted to exploring the ‘root causes’ of terrorism that development initiatives generally seek to ameliorate through infrastructure assistance and state capacity-building. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to duplicate the efforts of these scholars, or stray too far into the ‘root cause’ debate by critiquing current approaches to countering terrorism through infrastructure development, it must be said that this corpus of literature is divided on the ‘causes’ of Salafi-Jihadi violence, as it is those of terrorism *writ large*.⁷² True, ‘discontent’ of various forms is often cited as a rationale for terrorist violence (drawing largely from Gurr’s theory of “relative deprivation”⁷³): individuals who are content in their lives or faith are not apt to join the global Salafi Jihad, or any other terrorist movement

⁷² For example, the variables that are useful to explain terrorist violence are thoroughly discussed in Martha Crenshaw’s landmark work, *Terrorism in Context* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995).

⁷³ See Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

for that matter.⁷⁴ However, many people experience grave discontent, yet very few become martyrs in Iraq or join al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. Sageman's case studies debunk the myths that poverty, poor education, lack of opportunity, or other structural factors 'cause' jihadi violence, even if they provide 'ripe' environments for radicalism to flourish. As Magnus Ranstorp has observed, emerging patterns suggest that many mainstream Saudi families are contributing sons to the jihad in Iraq – patterns that recall the socio-economic backgrounds of the 11 September attackers.⁷⁵ Therefore, the ensuing recommendations will forgo detailing the myriad economic and infrastructure development initiatives that could be discussed, though this is not to say that these initiatives are devoid of merit: jihadi ideology does not exist in a vacuum. In so doing, a range of 'root causes' literature will not be referenced. The focus here is primarily combating ideas with ideas.

My approach – and really the rationale behind this paper – can also be supported through positive examples. A close relative of the 'root cause' literature is the debate that has circulated between two schools of thought seeking to explain the causes of recruitment to Islamic activism (both violent and non-violent), what Carrie Rosefsky Wickham has described as the "rational actor" and "motivational framing" schools.⁷⁶ The rational actor school, exemplified by Robert Pape's recent work on suicide bombers,⁷⁷ and more generally, Michael Scheuer's *Imperial Hubris* (where al-Qaida's violence is explained largely through an instrumental-political framework),⁷⁸ generally contends that individuals join violent social movements because they are motivated by off-setting benefits, whether "material, psychological, and/or emotional ... that are contingent upon participation."⁷⁹ Conversely, the "motivational framing" school developed by other scholars posits ideology as the primary explanatory factor in an individual's motivation to join contentious socio-religious movements like the global Salafi jihad: moral duty, "moral shock," obligation, and "deeply held values and beliefs, irrespective of the costs and benefits," are seen as the main factors for participation.⁸⁰ My approach adopts a third school, largely outlined by scholars like Wiktorowicz and Rosefsky Wickham: beliefs *and*

⁷⁴ Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 95.

⁷⁵ Magnus Ranstorp, "Al-Qa'ida - An Expanded Network of Terror," *RUSI Journal* (June 2005).

⁷⁶ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, "Interests, Ideas, and Islamist Outreach in Egypt," in Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.) *Islamic Activism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 231-232.

⁷⁷ See Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, 97:3 (August 2004)

⁷⁸ See Michael Scheuer, *Imperial Hubris* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, Inc, 2004).

⁷⁹ Rosefsky Wickham, "Interests, Ideas, and Islamist Outreach in Egypt," p. 231.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 232.

rational calculations (including both social processes and benefits) figure centrally in motivating and shaping Salafi-Jihadi violence. “Spiritual preferences” and “religious-ideological frameworks” define self-interest for the “rational true believer,” just as the culture of global jihad and “strategic logic” co-exist to shape violence at the organizational level.⁸¹ This largely reflects the Functionalist-Culturalist framework I have proposed elsewhere to explain al-Qaida’s warfare.⁸² Therefore, while the generation of civic space and the resolution of political grievances are critical to off-setting radicalization, it is equally important that countering specific tenets of Salafi-Jihadi thought receive the international community’s full attention.

Finally, it should be noted that many of the recommendations below will apply at multiple levels of the ideological model I introduced earlier. In other words, what might work to counter the ‘stage one’ functions of jihadi ideology might also work to counter those in ‘stage five’. This is due to the inherent overlap of some of the functions of Salafi-Jihadi ideology and its modes of communication.

A COUNTER-NARRATIVE

At the level where Salafi-Jihadi ideology portends to explain the international scene and the current state of the global *ummah* and prescribe its violent remedies, there is an urgent need to develop a viable global counter-narrative that is reinforced locally. This counter-narrative would work globally and locally to dismantle a number of ideas fundamental to the Salafi-Jihadi worldview. Strategically, it would attack the narrative that the Salafi-Jihadi battle is part of the epic struggle between good and evil; the notion that the West is inherently inimical to Islam and is warring against it; that jihadi icons like bin Laden and al-Zawahiri – and especially *takfiri* jihadis like al-Zarqawi, who have excommunicated and killed Muslim and Western non-combatants – are ‘heroes’ worthy of emulation; and so on. These elements of strategic focus roughly correspond to the counter-myth/alternative exemplar/metaphor shift models Casebeer and Russell recently proposed in the article “Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive ‘Counter-Narrative Strategy.’”⁸³

⁸¹ This is largely Quintan Wiktorowicz’s argument. See Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” abstract.

⁸² Cozzens, “Approaching al-Qaida.”

⁸³ William D. Casebeer and James A. Russell, “Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive ‘Counter-Narrative Strategy,’” *Strategic Insights*, 5:3 (March 2005).

One way a global counter-narrative might find purchase is to tap into the current debates within Islam concerning the role and legitimacy of violence in jihad (largely a product of the 'al-Aqsa Intifadah' and the war in Iraq), especially those focusing on the issue of excommunication (*takfir*).⁸⁴ Specifically, it can seize upon the harsh criticism levied by the Muslim community (including reform Salafis) at the *takfir*s, who many Muslims call 'Kharajites' – an infamous, violent sect from Islamic history that rebelled without just cause – and widely viewed as responsible for amplifying the suffering of Muslims worldwide by provoking Western powers and killing their co-religionists. Even al-Zarqawi's mentor, the Salafi-Jihadi ideologue Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, has rebuffed his former student's tactics and al-Qaida 'proper' drew similar criticism from Salafi scholars following the May and November 2003 Riyadh attacks and the November 2003 Istanbul bombings.⁸⁵ History is replete with opportunities that the international community might have seized upon to stem the groundswell of jihadi violence by acting swiftly to de-legitimize *takfir*, such as during the GIA's rampages in the 1990's, which even prompted bin Laden to withdraw his support.

Although the practical steps for implementing strategic counter-narratives require more attention than this paper can give, using the resources of an established, well-networked international body centered on Islam seems like a good start. Moreover, given that jihadi propaganda generally focuses on Muslims in their late teens and twenties – also the primary demographic contingent that debates contemporary issues pertaining to jihad on the Internet – implementing a strategic counter-narrative that features alternative myths, heroes, and metaphors must include a vibrant online component targeting not only this segment of the Muslim world but also the age group before it. Therefore the counter-narrative medium must include a strong cultural and educational component as well. Perhaps the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), which fulfills both of these criteria, can be prompted and supported by the international community to: 1) initiate online and satellite television campaigns, or tributes, emphasizing Muslim-non-Muslim partnerships that made significant contributions to humanity; 2) wage a concomitant campaign to promote historic Islamic 'heroes' with near-mythic gravitas (especially those with a reformist or military bent for purposes of legitimacy) whose accomplishments enhanced the lives of fellow Muslims; 3) and simultaneously deni-

⁸⁴ On the debate concerning jihad in Islam, see International Crisis Group, "Understanding Islamism," Middle East/North Africa Report No. 37, 2 March 2005.

⁸⁵ Reuven Paz, "Global Jihad and WMD: Between Martyrdom and Mass Destruction," in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown (eds) *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* (Washington, DC: The Hudson Institute, 2005), vol. 2. p. 79.

grate violence *against non-combatants* as un-heroic through the (perhaps confidential) testimonials of Muslim families who have both lost loved ones as, or to, *takfiris*? In fact, these themes generally resonate within the charter of the OIC's Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO).⁸⁶

In terms of regional and local counter-narrative approaches, officers answering to the OIC's bodies (perhaps ISESCO?) would support the global counter-narrative by engaging local Muslim leaders to provide financial and technical aid where necessary in order to field secondary-level curricula emphasizing the above themes. Gwenn Okruhlik noted the impact grassroots events have in defining global Islamic activism (and therefore counter-narratives) in her illustration of the efforts made by Saudi Salafi reformers in London to stay abreast of developments back home.⁸⁷ While instituting this idea would be unworkable without state consent, an OIC resolution backed by a strong behind-the-scenes push by the international community may provide the necessary legitimacy and regional openings.

It goes without saying that empowering the counter-narrative effectively at each level requires the Aristotelian logic of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*: it must be credible and credibly-delivered; it must appeal to audiences' emotions; and it should appeal to facts, as Thomas Coakley argued, drawing from the Peruvian counter-terrorism experience.⁸⁸ It must therefore come from the Muslim world itself – non-Muslims cannot weave and purvey this narrative as effectively, as Dr Kemal Helbawy, a former leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, suggested.⁸⁹ Drawing from this logic, in Saudi Arabia – a state of primary concern – this narrative might be peddled perhaps most effectively by non-jihadi Salafi activists harnessing the momentum of recent (limited) reforms. In this context, they might be given amplified space by the monarchy to operate and provide 'advice' in exchange for countering the *takfiri* thought that threatens the royal family through working to institute a version of the OIC curriculum tailored to suit Saudi society. In other words, while the curriculum might not glorify cooperation with the

⁸⁶ See <http://www.oic-oci.org/english/main/isesco.htm>

⁸⁷ Gwenn Okruhlik, "Making Conversation Possible," in Quintan Wiktorowicz (ed.), *Islamic Activism - A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2004), pp. 260-261.

⁸⁸ See Casebeer and Russell, "Storytelling and Terrorism." Here, they apply the work of CAPT Thomas Coakley's (USAF) unpublished paper, "The Argument against Terror: The Peruvian Experience, Globalization, US Policy," Institute for National Security Studies research paper, 2003.

⁸⁹ See Mahan Abedin's interview with the UK-based Dr. Kamal Helbawy, first president of the Muslim Assembly of Britain and former leader within the Muslim Brotherhood, "How to Deal with Britain's Muslim Extremists? An Interview with Kamal Helbawy," The Jamestown Foundation, *Spotlight on Terror* 3:6 (5 August 2005).

Western world, for example, it would still attack the ideology of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. By instituting the Aristotelian logic, this narrative could be altered slightly to pass muster with the Saudi ulema (body of scholars) and would be conveyed by a medium that is widely credible to the people, yet it would still accomplish at least one important function. Establishing counter-narratives could therefore benefit multiple political, social and religious stakeholders in the Muslim world, even if they must compromise slightly on their content.

However, the international community must be realistic in applying this approach: risk accompanies these opportunities for influence. Even if Abdullah Azzam did largely “revive” jihad in the twentieth century, the international community must recognize that the intra-faith debate about the nature of jihad and violence will likely never be resolved and may intensify pending further geopolitical unrest involving Muslim-non-Muslim protagonists.⁹⁰ Thus the counter-narrative could become imperiled. Indeed, many Muslims view jihad against non-Muslim occupiers as a duty – a view the Afghan jihad did much to reinforce, though this does not necessarily mean that the entirety of the counter-narrative would be de-legitimized. Moreover, unlike Shi’ia structures, Sunni Islam is fragmented and may be unable to sustain this counter-narrative at a global level, although effective, tailored grass-roots applications might survive state-level contention. And naturally, non-Muslim military interventions and occupations such as the Iraqi war, or the Russian incursion into Chechnya – or even regional separatist insurgencies with a Salafist component – are generally beyond the scope of the international community to forestall and could disembowel counter-narrative attempts, as could heavy-handed counter-terror campaigns. Repression by regimes coupled with Salafi accusations of impiety – not to mention the generally anti-democratic nature of Salafi thought which, following Ibn Taymiyyah construes democracy as a violation of God’s “unity of worship” (*tawhid*)⁹¹ – could also provide a fertile breeding ground for the *takfiri* ideology. The Algerian, Egyptian, and recently Saudi experiences substantiate this fear.

Mitigating some of these risks to a counter-narrative naturally demands that the international community develop effective incentives for regimes to commit to peace processes, especially where Salafis are waging localized insurgencies. Indeed, the political and existential

⁹⁰ For a Salafi-Jihadi account of the importance of Abdullah Azzam to “reviving” global jihad, see his biography by “Azzam Publications” in the preface of his last book, *The Lofty Mountain* (London: Azzam Publications, 2003), pp. xiv-xxiii.

⁹¹ For an excellent account of the evolution of Salafi thought, see Quintan Wiktorowicz, “A Genealogy of Radical Islam,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 28 (Autumn 2004), pp. 75-97.

components of Salafism exist symbiotically; taming the regional manifestations of the former can influence the global narrative of the later. Drawing from Jonathan Ross-Harrington's recent editorial, the international community must therefore pressure regional partners like ASEAN to "strategically and cooperatively engage all [of Asia's] aggrieved Muslim groups that seek political, rather than existential ends."⁹² However, it is true that despite the international community's best efforts, this strategy has seen minimal success in ameliorating the nearly intractable Palestinian-Israeli dilemma, for example. These risks aside, counter-narratives have had some successes historically, as Casebeer and Russell demonstrate, and most would agree that ideas (especially those that thrive on perceived injustice) must be countered by other ideas, however ambitious they might appear.⁹³

DIALOGUE: A COUNTER TO JIHADI SEPARATISM AND OBLIGATION

Enabling dialogues that target jihadi exclusivity (parallelism) and the social processes that inculcate an obligation to physical jihad appear fundamental to countering the second level functions of Salafi-Jihadi ideology. This is likely the level where individuals are most susceptible to intervention as they have not fully committed to fighting at home or abroad. The apparent initial (though empirically unverified) success of the Yemen Committee for Dialogue supports this strategy. It should also be noted that successful dialogue in one 'arena' of Salafi-Jihadi culture – or even the perception of dialogue, which indicates a wavering of belief – could be instrumental to fomenting cascading crises of belief within the wider culture of global jihad, much as the intimation of dialogue between US, Iraqi, and jihadi forces in Iraq "rattled" the Salafi insurgents.⁹⁴

Any approach to dialogue must follow the *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* approach outlined in Casebeer and Russell's work, which was apparently applied with some success in the context of the Yemeni initiative.⁹⁵ This means that a premium must be placed upon Islamic 'dialogue agents' sensitively engrained in local contexts and aware of local customs who possess grass-roots

⁹² See Jonathan Ross-Harrington's incisive editorial, "Taming Terror the South-east Asian Way," *Asia Times* (2 September 2005) at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/GI02Ae01.html

⁹³ See Casebeer and Russell, "Storytelling and Terrorism."

⁹⁴ See "Islamist insurgents seek to contain PR disaster: notes of defeatism," in *Jamestown Terrorism Focus*, 2:13 (13 July 2005).

⁹⁵ See Michael Taarnby, "Yemen's Committee for Dialogue: Can Jihadists Return to Society?" *Jamestown Terrorism Monitor* 3:14 (15 July 2005).

credibility and the means to leverage personal networks, whether in Yemen or France, for example.⁹⁶ This view was expressed above but merits a bit more commentary.

Helbawy's thoughts as an Islamist reformer might hold some validity here, even if they are themselves framed by a relatively exclusive ideology: "[Deconstructing jihadi ideas] should come from within Islam and not be forced upon it by outsiders. Westerners do not really understand the disease [of Salafi-Jihadism] and are likely to give the wrong injections. They are also wrongly informed by some third world tyrants."⁹⁷ Correct or not, Helbawy observes a state of incompatibility that manifests itself when Westerners and Salafi-Jihadis converge; their religious understandings and worldviews might simply be too different to facilitate productive discussion, let alone 'turn' a jihadist. Indeed, "a conversation of individuals of equal standing," which seems to be working to some degree in Yemen (364 jihadists have been released from prison) may not be reached between Salafi-Jihadis and non-Muslims, as the former firmly believe the latter are *kufir* and condemned to Hell.⁹⁸ However, it is interesting to note the somewhat odd bond that developed between Omar Bakri Muhammad, the erstwhile radical Salafi leader of the now-defunct al-Muhajiroun, and a Christian apologist.⁹⁹ It is an open question whether depoliticized discussion centering on, or debating religion conducted between individuals who speak plainly about faith and evidence no perceived hypocrisy¹⁰⁰ could offset perceptions of inequality that might otherwise staunch productive dialogue. Nevertheless, until more research is done on Salafi-Jihadi – non-Muslim dialogue, perhaps the most successful approach for the international community to attempt dialogue with Salafi-

⁹⁶ See Taarnby, "Yemen's Committee for Dialogue." The clerics involved with Yemen's apparently successful Committee for Dialogue exemplify credible local (or national) actors.

⁹⁷ See Mahan Abedin's interview with the UK-based Dr. Kamal Helbawy, first president of the Muslim Assembly of Britain and former leader within the Muslim Brotherhood, "How to Deal with Britain's Muslim Extremists? An Interview with Kamal Helbawy," The Jamestown Foundation, *Spotlight on Terror* 3:6 (5 August 2005).

⁹⁸ See Anthony McRoy's interview with Omar Bakri Muhammad, "There can be no end to Jihad," *Christianity Today*, 1 February 2005, at: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/105/22.0.html>. Bakri Muhammad said, "In terms of Islamic jurisprudence, only Muslims are innocent - non-Muslims are not. By default, all non-Muslims are rebel criminals against God. Muslims who engage in interfaith [gatherings] are apostate. God discriminates among man on basis of faith."

⁹⁹ Ibid. The former al-Muhajiroun was theologically close to al-Qaida, but it claimed that it restrained from waging jihad in Britain, their base, because of the treaty conditions of *al-'Ahd wal-Amaan*.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. Omar Bakri Muhammad said, "I feel very comfortable with Jay (Smith, the apologist) - with him what you see is what you get. He is no hypocrite, and neither are Salafis. His words and actions match his heart. He does not pretend by saying soft words about Islam. The Qu'ran calls for debate... Most U.S. evangelicals refuse to debate Muslims, unlike the courage of Jay, who boldly cries 'Jesus is Lord!'.

Jihadis, at least for the purposes of this discussion, is to empower and cooperate with local reformist Salafis. True, many reform Salafi ideologies (there are more than one) are close to the jihadis', but a primary difference – disavowal of violent revolution against the government under which they live – might enable some level of cooperation to thwart a greater threat. In this light, perhaps Hizb ut Tahrir's recent suggestion for dialogue with the British government and other such offers should be seriously considered?¹⁰¹

Following this approach, there are several possible models (among many) for facilitating dialogue with would-be jihadis designed to strike at jihadi parallelism and socialization that are potentially worth further investigation by the international community. The first of these is a measure recently introduced by a new national advisory council formed by the Muslim Parliament in the United Kingdom that would establish "new rules and education standards with the view of getting more 'homegrown' Muslim religious leaders ... [who] speak better English and [are] better acquainted with British customs and habits."¹⁰² Admittedly, this is a broad-brush approach and might only apply to the European Muslim diaspora, but it represents a potentially effective opening to combat the exclusivity of Salafi-Jihadi culture. Second- and third-generation Muslim immigrants tend to be poorly-versed in the faith of their parents (and in their parents' languages), yet are highly-desirable as Salafi-Jihadi operatives for obvious reasons. Therefore, Salafi-Jihadi teachers in Europe are, on the whole, free to speak in exclusive generic themes (especially *jihad*, *takfir*, *hijrah*, etc.) rather than from within the framework of 'traditional' Sunni learning to win young hearts and minds – as al-Qaida did in the Afghanistan-based camps – and often do so in Western languages.¹⁰³ Content analysis therefore might be an easy way to distinguish between a militant Salafi and a reformer.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, these 'teachers' typically have 'battlefield' or 'training camp' credentials, as opposed to reputable religious degrees. Therefore the efforts of British Muslims to ensure 'proper' educational

¹⁰¹ See Jan Jun, "Hizb Ut Tahrir Challenges Government's Proposed Ban with Offer for Dialogue?" Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, (5 September 2005) at: <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/09/3f0461f4-1022-4b61-94a7-ff2e72e6c6bc.html>

¹⁰² Jan Jun, "U.K.: British Muslims To Get More Imams Who Are U.K.-Born And Bred," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (6 October 2005) at: <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/10/78EA1225-0B0D-4CF7-9624-86A0CAA30032.html>

¹⁰³ See Rueven Paz, "Middle East Islamism in the European Arena," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6:3 (September 2002); also see Mahan Abedin, "The Essence of Al Qaeda: An Interview with Sa'ad al-Faqih", *Jamestown Foundation Spotlight on Terror* 2:2 (5 February 2004).

¹⁰⁴ As noted earlier, talk of excommunicating individual Muslims and advocating violence against nominally Muslim regimes is generally indicative of a Salafi-Jihadi worldview.

requirements and the English-speaking abilities of its imams might go a long way towards establishing their credibility and accessibility to young Muslims in Europe, the latter of potentially significance importance to countering feelings of alienation. To consider a European-wide effort of this type, initiated by Muslims, might smack of naïveté, but it could provide a valuable strategic counterweight to Salafi-Jihadi ideology and socialization. One of the biggest potential obstacles to overcome, however, might be the new imams' book learning, which logically does not approach the street credibility of some of the most 'successful' battle-hardened Salafi clerics like Abu Hamza al-Masri.

A second model for consideration with potentially wider international applicability stems from Yemen's Committee for Dialogue. Although this initiative appears familiar to the international community and need not be described at great length here (Taarnby's brief report is quite detailed), it appears to hold promise. First, it exposes the vulnerable underside of jihadi ideology using Muslim scholars who go to great lengths to emphasize their independence from the Saleh regime – both necessary credentials to establish a semblance of legitimacy. Second, the foundations for dialogue are equality and Islam; as detailed above these are seemingly essential criteria for a productive discussion with jihadis. The commitment to base dialogue on these principles alone is even enshrined in a document that emphasizes “equality and respect” and religion as the sole criteria for talking.¹⁰⁵ Judging by the numbers of jihadis that have been returned to society (not to mention the death threats issued to members of the Committee) this de-politicized and personal approach established upon the passion of each party – Islam – appears highly effective at deconstructing the exclusive worldview of *some* militant Salafis.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, once these are able to re-integrate into the community and potentially re-establish their positions with their kin/tribal networks, it is possible that they might become the most critically effective jihadi de-socializing agents available. However, as Taarnby notes, little empirical evidence exists to gauge jihadi recidivism; nor has a threshold for success been established.¹⁰⁷ Also, there is likely not much accessible data available to the international community to determine whether these jihadis were actually able to re-connect with, or influence their former comrades-in-arms.

In terms of the implementation of this program in other areas of the Muslim world, the international community's first step should be to commission a comprehensive fact-finding

¹⁰⁵ Taarnby, “Yemen's Committee for Dialogue,” p. 7.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 8.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

mission through its Yemeni interlocutors to better understand the committee's work and to assess the reliability of the data coming from Yemen over time. If continued international community interest exists, perhaps the next step towards wider international implementation would be to use existing public-private networks linking European governments with reputable European clerics who maintain extensive networks throughout the Muslim world. The European clerics (perhaps through an association) could run this dialogue program, reporting periodically to the international community, which would fund, but not dictate, the clerics' work. This process would ensure both a level of autonomy and natural points of European contact to which the country 'teams' would report. The international community – perhaps under the EU's auspices – would then meet annually to review the initiative's progress to determine if future funding is warranted.

Of course, authorization for the activities of the country teams would prove challenging for many reasons, some of which might include host country concerns over potential revelations of prisoner human rights violations, or previous anti-regime protest on the part of certain European clerics (to name just two), but these might be assuaged through persistent diplomacy. It must also be remembered that the Salafi-Jihadis pose a serious threat to nominally Muslim regimes.

Third, Helbawy's work through the grass-roots Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) to de-radicalize jihadi youth in the United Kingdom also merits the attention of the international community. Beyond its functions in *da'wa* (appeal to Islam) and teaching "proper" Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the MAB, Helbawy asserts, holds seminars designed to moderate Salafi-Jihadis "through dialogue and consultation."¹⁰⁸ Helbawy's next project, which he apparently proposed to London mayor Ken Livingstone, is to develop "Treatment Centers" or "Houses for Extremists."¹⁰⁹ Similar to half-way homes, or care facilities for the elderly, Helbawy's depiction of these centers in a recent interview framed them as tools explicitly designed to counter jihadi socialization and parallelism for young men bordering on full-embrace of militant Salafi ideology. "Treatment," in Helbawy's words, would consist of "Discussion and dialogue with the Ulama [Muslim scholars] philosophers and Westerners as well as teaching

¹⁰⁸ See Abedin's interview with Helbawy, "How to Deal with Britain's Muslim Extremists? An Interview with Kamal Helbawy."

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

the seerah (biography) of the Prophet and fiqh of [jurisprudence pertaining to] minorities and the role played by the West in advancing human civilization.”¹¹⁰

Not only do Helbawy’s projects meet (and support) the criteria for dialogue mentioned above but they also represent explicit, targeted counter-socialization attempts by someone with Islamist credentials in a relatively neutral setting. True, the issue of convincing militants to take part in these activities beyond being forced to through arrest might be next to impossible (some are indeed incorrigible), but if the logic of the Yemeni initiative is upheld, where respect, religion, and equality are the foundations for dialogue, individuals with grass-roots credibility might be able to convince youngsters in particular to participate. Moreover, it might provide an interesting comparison with the Yemeni initiative – a study that could inform future international community dialogue-based projects. Conversely, should Helbawy’s project fail, it might do so because any organization – Muslim or not – known to be even tangentially connected to *kufri* governments is illegitimate according to the Salafi-Jihadi storyline.¹¹¹ Yet, failure might also provide another useful mode of comparison for the international community and could help shape (or discard altogether) future counter-radicalization initiatives that treat jihadism as a disease.

Naturally these ‘treatment’ houses might be appropriate beyond Europe, if managed a bit differently. For instance, they could find application in areas of violent conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims, such as in Iraq, Afghanistan, or in Southeast Asia, where demonization of the ‘other’ is often aimed at youth and sometimes couched in Salafi-Jihadi frames to win recruits. However, in these venues it may not be appropriate to engage Islamists to run them; non-Islamist Sunnis, perhaps of the predominant local ‘school’, would be a better option. This is because many affiliated with groups like the Muslim Brothers support jihads in areas like Iraq, even if they do not overtly call for violence in the West. For these foreign initiatives, the international community might consider partnering with *Medecins Sans Frontieres*, which treats psycho-social trauma in conflict zones; maintains a broad international network, both bureaucratically and operationally; and cherishes its neutrality; to build upon Helbawy’s ideas.¹¹² It might consider doing so by using Muslim clergy with legitimate university degrees, vetted

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ See Abedin’s interview with Helbawy, “How to Deal with Britain’s Muslim Extremists? An Interview with Kamal Helbawy.” According to Helbawy, the MAB’s partner organization, the Muslim Council of Britain, has been “pressured” by HMG, and “forced to make some compromises that would not appeal to all Muslims.”

¹¹² See *Medecins’* English website at: <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/aboutus/what.cfm>

perhaps by an expert within *Medecins*, or even by the OIC. Of course, *Medecins* in this case should also provide similar services to other protagonist communities impacted by the conflict, as would be both ethical and incumbent upon a neutral organization. If Helbawy's depiction of Salafi-Jihadis as socially and/or religiously "sick" individuals (altogether different from mental illness) is at all credible, *Medecins* might consider partnering with the international community in this initiative as part of a 'prophylaxis' against future violence.¹¹³

Beyond utilizing dialogue as a means to counter jihadi socialization, an additional option might be considered by the international community. As observed, the promise of brotherhood and secure identity are essential components of the Salafi-Jihadi recruitment (or "joining") process globally.¹¹⁴ This 'promise' can be attacked by the international community through enabling programs that regional and local Muslim actors can use to undermine the very foundations of this Salafi-Jihadi 'fraternity', whether in the suburbs of Paris or in Morocco. In the Muslim world at least, this program would naturally coincide with the OIC counter-narrative initiative mentioned earlier. Specifically, these programs would highlight instances where Salafi-Jihadi 'brotherhood' was apparently replaced by treachery and deceit. For example, they could draw from the experiences of individuals like Ahmed Abdullah al-Shaya, an 18 year-old Saudi who was conned into driving a butane-laden delivery truck near the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad only to have his al-Qaida in Iraq handlers detonate the truck via remote control well before al-Shaya's intended 'martyrdom' operation.¹¹⁵ Al-Shaya, who is permanently disfigured, has vowed revenge on his former comrades-in-arms and renounced his affection for bin Laden because "he is killing Muslims."¹¹⁶

COUNTERING SALAFI-JIHADI ACTIVATION AND DEFENSE

Admittedly, countering the activation and defense phases of Salafi-Jihadi ideology is inherently difficult, given that these militants have likely been indoctrinated for sometime.¹¹⁷ Yet, as Wiktorowicz's example of Algerian reformist Alid Cherifi demonstrates, who through university lectures, cassette tapes and dialogue with GIA fighters convinced many to surrender, it is

¹¹³ See

¹¹⁴ Taarnby, "Recruitment of Islamist Terrorists in Europe," p. 38.

¹¹⁵ See Steven Komarow and Sabah al-Anbaki, "Would-be bomber angry at those who sent him," *USA Today*, 24 January 2005 at: http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2005-01-24-suicide-bomber-revenge_x.htm

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Wiktorowicz, "Suicide Bombings," p. 14.

possible.¹¹⁸ Beyond bolstering credible Salafi reformers at the regional and local level, one of the most viable means of countering jihadi activation might be for the international community to enable Muslim organizations – whether in educational institutions within insurgent zones where the international community might already have an established presence, or in Muslim diaspora communities in the West – to attack the credibility of the Salafi-Jihadi teachers who directly and indirectly uphold the belief-system that drives the underlying self-interested aspects of the jihadi activation process centered upon martyrdom. This was touched upon earlier, but it is worth revisiting briefly from a different angle.

As Wiktorowicz observed, “Potential followers need to be convinced that there are scholars who are more knowledgeable than jihadis and thus better mentors.”¹¹⁹ Indeed, many of these so-called ‘scholars’ are what Olivier Roy deemed “new Islamist intellectuals – well educated individuals from Western-style schools who turned to religion after facing blocked social mobility in their professions.”¹²⁰ Indeed, few Salafi-Jihadis have *serious* religious training that would qualify them to guide others were an objective, comparative process invoked by their students (though there are exceptions like Omar Abdel Rahman, who has a PhD).¹²¹ Further, many of these Salafi ‘teachers’ are very charismatic, which helps them overcome their relative lack of formal religious training and ‘qualifies them’ in the eyes of their students. However, in some cases, this too could be challenged by accusations of hypocrisy if they have never themselves participated in jihad yet encourage others to do so. After all, Abdullah Azzam was in his forties when he fought the Soviets in Afghanistan!¹²² It could also be emphasized that some Salafi-Jihadi preachers such as al-Masri or Bakri Muhammad pursue advanced degrees in religious studies even though they claim this to be unnecessary.¹²³

Further, videos depicting the testimonies of Salafi-Jihadi ‘martyrs’ as well as jihadi audio statements appear particularly important to the overall propagation of Salafi-Jihadi ideology; the justification of attacks; psychological warfare; and to furthering the overall strategies of the global jihadi movement. The content of these must be countered more effectively by the international community – again, perhaps through the above-proposed OIC counter-narrative

¹¹⁸ Wiktorowicz, “The new global threat,” p. 29.

¹¹⁹ Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” p. 13.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p.12. Also, see (as quoted in Wiktorowicz) Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, Carol Volk trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

¹²¹ Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombers,” p. 12.

¹²² See Azzam’s biography, *The Lofty Mountain*, p. xviii.

¹²³ Wiktorowicz, “Suicide Bombings,” p. 12.

program – and should be roundly vilified as hate speech and reduced as much as is possible to the local level. Were after-attack videos or ‘wills’ not seen as critical to the Salafi-Jihadi movement’s success, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, who wore multiple ‘hats’ in the period leading up to 9/11, would not have bothered to produce the 9/11 hijackers’ videotaped testimonies; nor would the notorious Mustafa Setmariam recently bemoan the fact that videoed martyrs’ wills did not follow the recent Sinai attacks.¹²⁴ As Azzam said in a lecture prior to presenting a “collection” of biographies of martyrs who fell in the Jihad against the Soviet Union, “By the likes of these martyrs, nations are established, convictions are brought to life and ideologies are made victorious. For this reason, we have compiled a section about the lives of martyrs.”¹²⁵ While there is an ideological chasm separating Azzam’s thought from other manifestations of Salafi-Jihadi ideology (especially al-Zarqawi’s), the common importance attached to enshrining the words and ‘heroism’ of jihadi martyrs cannot be overstated and therefore must be attacked. Sageman’s call to establish an international “anti-defamation league”¹²⁶ to function as a moral voice to condemn the content of Salafi-Jihadi statements and ‘martyrdom’ videos, as an alternate option to the proposed OIC involvement, might also be an option for the international community to consider.¹²⁷

Whether through the OIC or an anti-defamation body reporting to the United Nations, this body should also exert moral pressure against media outlets to persuade them from airing these videos and statements. Though controversial, this might be an instance where the interest of global security trumps those of the media’s. As Ranstorp wrote in his statement to the 9/11 Commission:

Western media also must recognise their responsibility in responsible reporting as they become too easily convenient outlets for sowing the psychology of fear, amplifying the violence and extremist messages by Bin-Laden and al-Qaeda. The role

¹²⁴ See Reuven Paz, “Al-Qaeda’s Search for new Fronts: Instructions for Jihadi Activity in Egypt and Sinai,” PRISM Occasional Papers, 3:7 (October 2005), pp. 4-5.

¹²⁵ Abdullah Azzam, “Extracts from the lectures of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam titled: ‘Will of the Shaheed’ and ‘A Message from the Shaheed Sheikh to the Scholars,” in “Martyrs: The Building Blocks of Nations,” at: www.religioscope.com/info/doc/jihad/azzam_martyrs.htm (downloaded 26 January 2005).

¹²⁶ See Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, p. 182.

¹²⁷ For instance, Al-Jazeera aired “The Wills of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs” in April 2002.

of al-Jazeera is a case in hand where it has become an uncensored vehicle for distributing ideological and even indirect operational directives.¹²⁸

If persistent, well-funded and inclusive, these initiatives may help Setmariam realize his fears that the Salafi-Jihadi movement is increasingly being reduced to local and disjointed components without a coherent strategy – a notion utterly contrary to the global jihadi movement’s insistence that it represents a monolithic, ‘true’ global *ummah*.¹²⁹

The above represent but a few strategic openings the international community might explore to counter Salafi-Jihadi ideology, socialization and mediums through development initiatives. Certainly many more could have been discussed. One criticism might be that the European context received too much attention in the above analysis. However, it must be remembered that so many of those who threaten the West live or transit through Europe.

Conclusion

Understanding the functions of Salafi-Jihadi ideologies and pursuing ideas-based counter-measures are essential steps to successfully competing against fourth generation adversaries. Military means alone cannot prevail. Through the introduction of a simple model rooted in the research of other scholars, this paper explained and analyzed the multifunctional nature of Salafi-Jihadi ideology and its marriage to social processes; defined and explained some of the modes through which this ideology exerts influence at each level of the model; and generated recommendations on how to counter this ideology through development initiatives. These recommendations were framed as entry points for action; they are strategic openings that might be further explored by the international community.

The overall intent in this paper was to provide a framework and approach that could be expanded in scope and qualitatively enhanced through future research. Some avenues for further

¹²⁸ Magnus Ranstorp, “Statement of Magnus Ranstorp to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States,” 31 March 2003 at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/congress/9-11_commission/030331-ranstorp.htm

¹²⁹ See Reuven Paz, “Al-Qaeda’s Search for new Fronts: Instructions for Jihadi Activity in Egypt and Sinai,” PRISM Occasional Papers, 3:7 (October 2005), pp. 4-5.

assessment, such as following the evolution of Yemen's Committee for Dialogue and considering the progress of Helbawy's programs, for example, were touched upon above. Other lines of enquiry that might also be pursued by the international community relevant to understanding and countering Salafi-Jihadi ideology include:

- *A comparative study of counter-ideology development initiatives in the Muslim world.* This research would critically compare the successes and failures of these initiatives, from capacity building initiatives to educational reform, in the nuanced insurgent environments where Salafis are fighting.
- *A deeper understanding of the functions and effects of 'martyr's wills' and the overall utility of jihadi media in the radicalization processes.* The utility and function of these within the radicalization and legitimization processes – not to mention the life-cycles of jihadi cells – is important to better understand in order to counter their strategic value.
- *More case studies analyzing inter-faith debate between Salafis and non-Muslims.* The respect Omar Bakri Muhammad demonstrated for his Christian interlocutor was striking. Further case studies analyzing discussions of this type might shed light on whether possibilities for inter-faith dialogue with even more radical Salafi-Jihadis exist, and if so, how productive they might be (if at all).
- *More research on the function of 'neutral spaces' provided by sport in counter-ideology.* Ranstorp writes, "More effort needs to be focused on the power and role of sports as a 'neutral' vehicle for social change as exemplified by Youth Sports Foyle in Ireland and the Sports For Good Foundation."¹³⁰ This call to search for common, de-politicized ground through sport is also supported by Mark Juergensmeyer in *Terror in the Mind of God*.¹³¹ Juergensmeyer quotes an Islamist Palestinian youth jailed for alleged terrorist involvement who ventures that he would never consider attacking a soccer stadium or his favourite Israeli football stars.¹³² In this context, it is interesting to note that soccer – a game based upon common symbols, generally global adherence to a set of rules and a desire for athletic endeavour and competition that respects no single culture – has

¹³⁰ Magnus Ranstorp, "Statement of Magnus Ranstorp to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States," 31 March 2003 at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/congress/9-11_commission/030331-ranstorp.htm

¹³¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 241.

¹³² Ibid.

recently come under attack in Saudi Arabia by radical Salafi clerics because its rules are used by “infidels” and Muslims alike.¹³³

These are but a few recommendations for further study; many other pertinent avenues for exploration exist.

In closing, Sun Tzu’s 3000 year-old maxim holds for today: Countering an enemy of the international community entails knowing this enemy. Crafting viable development initiatives to thwart Salafi-Jihadi thought therefore mandates understanding its functions and appeal. In the post-September 11 world, characterized by fourth generation combatants, the pursuit of enhanced international security mandates that the blind not lead the blind. In the words of Jason Burke, “All terrorist violence, ‘Islamic’ or otherwise, is unjustifiable... But just because we condemn does not mean we should not strive to comprehend. We need to keep asking why.”¹³⁴ And like our adversaries we, too, must consider this a war for the ages, not just for the next election cycle.

¹³³ See Y. Admon, “Anti-Soccer Fatwas Led Saudi Soccer Players to Join Jihad in Iraq,” MEMRI Inquiry and Analysis Series – 245, 7 October 2005 at:

<http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=ia&ID=IA24505>

¹³⁴ Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).